Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 4th February 1871.

No. 108. Read the following Endorsement of the Revenue Department, dated 9th January 1871:—

Read the following letter from the Conservator of Forests, to the Secretary to Government, Revenue Department, dated Camp at Ootacamund, 4th January 1871, No. 2,530.

In forwarding the documents as per margin, for the information of Government, I have the honour to inform you that I consider it very much to the interest of Government that some rule should be laid down that all Government departments should draw their supplies of timber from the depôts of the Forest Department, and that only in the event of our not being able to supply their wants should they be allowed to purchase from the local private markets or from contractors.

- Letter No. 498, dated 17th December 1870, from the Deputy Conservator of Madura, etc., forests, to the Conservator of Forests.
- Copy of letter No. 240, dated 20th September 1870, from do. to the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, Palamcottah.
- Copy of letter No. 171, dated 7th November 1870, from the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to the Deputy Conservator of Madura, etc., forests.
- Copy of Statement showing the rates paid for timber in the several ranges of Madura and Tinnevelly Districts.
- 1 Statement showing the average rates of the different sorts of timber in Madura (town).
- 1 Statement showing the sale rates of timber from the Government Depôt at Cumbum, Pereacolum, Pulney, and Ambasamudrum.

2. By comparing the enclosed list of rates paid for timber by the Department Public Works in the Madura and Tinnevelly Ranges, furnished by the Acting Superintending Engineer of the 8th Division, with the statement of rates ruling in our depôts in the same districts, as furnished by Lieutenant Walker, and forwarded herewith, it will be at once seen that the Department Public Works are paying far more for their timber by resorting to private markets and contractors than if they indented on the depôts of the Forest Department; the same system prevails more or less throughout the Presidency, and must be adverse to the interest of Government. I will not say that the Engineer's Department do not in some instances obtain timber from private sources cheaper than they could from our depôts, or that this can ever entirely cease to be the case as long as the Government forests are as imperfectly guarded and conserved as they are at present, or whilst there are tracts of private forest worked without any attention to conservancy and in no way under imperial control; but even allowing that our rates are in excess of those of private sources, it must still be to the interest of Government that all their timber should be drawn from their own depôts, and strict rules to this effect will doubtless enable our department gradually to develope itself, and will besides be a considerable check upon illicit felling.

3. Under the present system, profits that should be going towards the development of the Forest Department are finding their way into the pockets of petty contractors. It will be seen by the correspondence forwarded, that the Engineer's Department acknowledge this. Under such a system timber must cost Government more than if drawn from their own depôts, though the subordinates in the Department Public Works, looking to a per-centage, would probably persuade their officers that the reverse is the case. Again, we can never know under existing circumstances what timber may be required from us. If the Public Works Department can procure, or imagine they can procure their supplies a little cheaper from

outsiders, we are not indented upon at all; but, if these sources fail we are perhaps suddenly called upon to supply a large amount, and then there is an outcry if we have not a seasoned supply in hand, or perhaps a grumble at our rates, and a long correspondence before the usual vouchers are granted. I am referring to facts. I would therefore strongly recommend that all supplies should, when possible, be drawn from our depôts, and that approximate indents should be sent in to us periodically showing future requirements, so that we may be prepared to meet them.

From the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Madura and Tinnevelly, to the Conservator of Forests, Madras, dated Camp at Trichinopoly, 17th December 1870, No. 498.

I HAVE the honour, in forwarding copy of a letter addressed by me to the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, and his reply, to request that you will call the attention of Government to the advisability of laying down some rules with the object of causing the supply of timber required by the Department of Public Works and all Government Departments to be drawn from our depôts when available. I have already drawn attention to this point—*vide* my Annual Administration Reports for 1868-69 (Salem and South Arcot), and 1869-70 (Madura and Tinnevelly).

2. The introduction and extension of departmental working is naturally distasteful to the timber merchants and contractors, and even at first to the general public, who are led to believe that the rates charged in the Government Depôts are excessive and far higher than those at which the timber could be obtained on the license and voucher system; the fact being that it is quite the reverse. If Government Departments do not show the example of indenting on us for wood, not only do we lose largely from waste and decay, not to mention the interest on money expended for felling, squaring, dragging, carting, etc., and the pay of the depôt establishments, but parties are encouraged by the large outside demand to carry on a system of illicit felling with or without the connivance of our subordinates.

3. If you will refer to the statement which I have the honour to submit, and compare it with the original submitted by Major Payne, you will observe the enormous difference betwixt the rates charged in the Department Public Works and those ruling in our depôts. The Superintending Engineer's statement gives, it must be remembered, in most instances, the rates "wrought and put up" whilst ours is all "rough wrought;" but that in no way accounts for the great discrepancy in price. In fact, the rates for sawing are, as a rule, low, varying from six pies to one anna per square foot.

4. The fact that the subordinates of the Public Works Department prefer buying from contractors to coming to our depôts or indenting through their Range Officers, is well known to the officers of that department, and I fear we cannot but infer that Overseers and Sub-Overseers find the former course more compatible with their private advantage. I have never yet heard a good or sufficient reason for the Government supply being drawn from private sources when available in their own depôts. If we knew that we had to provide for it we should endeavour to keep a supply of the descriptions and scantling most required, and comply with any indents of the Range Officer or Superintending Engineer in preference to any others, adjusting the accounts by simple receipts or vouchers. An approximate estimate of quantity and description of timber required, and where, might be sent in by the Superintending Engineer early each year on receipt of his budget orders, and the timber thus supplied cannot surely be worse than that drawn from private parties or firms who have too often received or purchased it from the clandestine fellers.

5. I would strongly advocate the publication of a stringent rule that all Public Departments requiring timber, bamboos, etc., should, in the first instance, apply to the special department, and that only in the event of the latter being unable to supply it within a reasonable time should purchases from the local market (private) be authorized or permitted.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 4th February 1871.

From the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Madura and Tinnevelly, to the Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, dated Camp at Kadyanuller, 20th September 1870, No. 240.

I HAVE the honour to request that you will furnish me as early as possible with a statement of the rates paid by your department per cubic foot for timber in the several Talooks or Ranges in Madura and Tinnevelly, the description of timber used, and whether it is received in the rough, squared off, or sawn up to measurement.

2. I am convinced that the rates are greatly in excess of those at which it could be supplied by the Government Department, and am anxious to obtain reliable data on the subject, which I trust you will do all in your power to supply.

From the Acting Superintending Engineer, 8th Division, to the Deputy Conservator of Forests, Madura and Tinnevelly, dated Palamcottah, 7th November 1870, No. 2,171.

WITH reference to your letter, No. 240, dated 20th September 1870, I have the honour to forward herewith a statement showing the rates paid per cubic foot for timber of various descriptions by Range Officers in the 8th Division, and to inform you that in many of the ranges timber is supplied by petty contractors, who, I think, must make very considerable profits. Teak, on account of its rumoured scarcity, is gone out of use altogether in the 8th Division, and very inferior kinds of jungle-wood are now, I regret to say, frequently used in Government buildings.

Statement showing the rates paid for Timber in the several Ranges of the Madura and Tinnevelly Districts.

	MADURA.				TINNEVELLY.				Remarks.
	1st Range.	2nd Range.	3rd Range.	Paumben Range.	1st Range.	2nd Range.	3rd Range.	4th Range.	
	Madura Talook, Tirumungalam do. Meylore do.	Dindigul Talook, Pulney do. Pereacolum do.	Ramnad and Shevagungah Zemindaries.	—	Tinnevelly Talook Thenkari do. Nangunary do.	Ambasamoodrum Talook. Tencasy do.	Streevelliputhoor Talook. Shunkernainar Covil do.	Sattur Talook, Ootapedarum.	
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	
Congoo wood, wrought and put up per cubic foot.	......	......	......	......	3 8 0	*3 to 3 6 0	......	3 8 0	* Paid in Tencasy Talook.
Vengay do. do.	3 4 0	2 8 0	3 0 0	......	{†3 4 0 to 5}	*3 to 3 6 0	2 4 0	3 8 0	† Do. in Thenkari Talook.
Teak‡ do. do.	......	3 to 3 8 0	......	......	......	......	......	......	‡ It is very doubtful whether any teak has actually been used of late years. Mr. Hayne, the Range Officer, does not state in his letter, No. 235 of 11th instant, for what particular works he purchased the teak.
Veckalee do. do.	......	1 8 0	......	......	......	......	1 6 0	......	
Mathagari Vemboo do. do....	......	1 8 0	......	......	......	......	......	......	
Paulai	......	......	3 0 0	......	......	......	......	......	
Ven Teak	......	......	3 0 0	1 5 3	......	......	......	3 8 0	
Asaney	......	......	3 0 0	1 9 6	......	......	......	......	
Iron wood, Rough.	......	......	......	1 4 0	......	......	......	......	
Naugu, Wrought.	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 12 0	......	
Mailala, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 8 0	......	
Shembaga Pala, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 8 0	......	
Munjel kadambu, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 10 0	......	
Vagai, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 4 0	......	
Kunnupalai, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	1 6 0	......	
Augillee, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	......	3 8 0	
Thainbavoo, do. ...	......	......	......	......	......	......	......	3 8 0	

7th November 1870.

(Signed) G. M. PAYNE, Major,
Ag. Supg. Engineer, 8th Division.

Proceedings of the Madras Government, Public Works Department, 4th February 1871.

Statement showing the average rates of the different sorts of Timbers in Madura (Town).

Name and description of Timber.	Rate per cubic foot.	Remarks.
	RS. A. P.	
Vengay joists	1 12 5	These are the rates charged by Native merchants in the bazaar. Much of the timber is believed to be clandestinely felled in Government forests without any payment.
Veckalee do.	1 5 0	
Teak do.	1 13 0	
Vaghey beam	1 13 10	
Vengay planks	0 14 2	
Thothagathy do.	3 6 1	All is said to be drawn from Zemindary forests.
Mathagari Vemboo	1 14 8	
Munjakadambay	1 7 10	

(Signed) C. J. WALKER, Lieutenant,
Deputy Conservator.

Statement showing the sale rate of Timber from the Government Depôts at Cumbum, Pereacolum, Pulney, and Ambasamoodrum.

Description of Timber.	Rate per cubic foot. Cumbum.	Pereacolum.	Pulney.	Ambasamoodrum, (Tinnevelly District).	Remarks.
	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	RS. A. P.	
Teak	1 4 0	1 8 0	1 4 0	1 8 0	The rates for sawn timber in Ambasamoodrum Depôt are Annas 4 per cubic foot extra. In other depôts no sawn timber is available.
Thothagaty (Black-wood).	1 2 0	1 4 0	1 2 0	1 8 0	
Vengay	1 2 0	1 4 0	1 2 0	1 8 0	
Vaghey	0 13 0	1 0 0	0 13 0	......	
Munjakadamboo ... ... } Malavemboo ... ... } Velvala ... ... } Veckalee ... ... } Kasturi ... ... } Maroothy ... ... }	0 11 0	0 14 0	0 11 0	......	
Ayni	......	......	......	1 8 0	
Cong	......	......	......	1 8 0	
Nang	......	......	......	1 8 0	
Shem	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Mathagari Vemboo ...	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Agal	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Karangalli	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Davudaram	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Maila	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Kadambai	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Poombudri	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Shembaga Pala	......	......	......	1 2 0	
Timbers not specified above	......	......	......	1 0 0	This rate is tentative in Ambasamoodrum.

(Signed) C. J. WALKER, Lieutenant,
Deputy Conservator of Forests.

TRANSFERRED to the Department of Public Works.

(Signed) W. HUDLESTON,
Secretary to Government.

No. 109. ORDER THEREON, 4th February 1871, No. 352.

CIVIL WORKS, No. 11.

In these papers the Conservator of Forests submits, for the consideration of Government, the propriety of granting to his department a monopoly of the supply of timber to the Public Works and other Government Departments, on the ground that all such profits as can be made from trade in the article may go to the development of his department, and not to the encouragement of private enterprise or the illicit felling of trees.

2. In support of his views Major Beddome furnishes statements to show the prices at which various descriptions of timber can be supplied by the Forest Department and that at which the same kinds of timber are charged to Government in Public Works Estimates. These statements are, however, defective, inasmuch as, while the prices of the Forest Department are those charged for timber in the log, those of the Public Works Department include the cost of working and putting up. Taking teak for example, the price at which it is stated that it can be delivered in Madura by the Forest Department is Rupees 1-13-0 "rough wrought," whilst the charge by the Public Works Department for the same description of wood "wrought and put up" is shown to be from Rupees 3 to 3-8-0. Judging from these rates, and making only the necessary allowance for the labour of working up, for wastage, and for the expense of fitting, it does not appear to the Government that the charge of the Public Works Department for this building material is necessarily excessive.

3. At the Presidency the best Moulmein teak can be purchased in picked logs at from Rupees 80 to 85 a ton of 50 cubic feet, or for somewhat less than the rate at which the Forest Department desire the timber to be obtained from it to be carried into general public use. Moulmein timber is not of course everywhere procurable, but if it be considered that it is generally to be obtained for about Rupees 1-9-0 per cubic foot, in well shaped and squared logs that can be wrought up with a minimum degree of labour and wastage, and that the Public Works charge for it so wrought up is, at Madras, Rupees 2-15-0 per cubic foot, it is apparent that the Forest Department charge of Rupees 1-13-0 per cubic foot for a kind of timber in the rough much less susceptible of economical adaptation cannot be looked upon as very moderate, while the charge of Rupees 3 to 3-8-0 for the same timber wrought and put up is relatively far from exorbitant.

4. Under these circumstances the Government cannot see sufficient grounds for restricting the purchase of timber by either the Public Works or other departments to the stock likely to be made available by the Forest Department. The Government, however, determine to point the attention of the officers of the Department Public Works to the sources of supply now opened to them by the development of the Forest Establishment. They desire that the Department of Public Works shall in all cases consider and enquire whether the timber which they require may not be more economically obtained from the Forest Department, and they will confer with the officers of the Forest Department with reference to the various qualities of wood which may be rendered available for the public service

from the forests of this Presidency, the object of Government being to save the stores of teak which are still exisiting as much as possible.

(True Extract.)

(Signed) CHARLES A. ORR, Colonel, R. E.,
Secretary to Government.

To Superintending Engineers.
To the Conservator of Forests.
,, Revenue Department.
To Major R. B. Kennedy.

Exd. S. T. Augustin.

Govt. of {1871} Madras.

PUBLIC WORKS.

To

SUPERINTENDING ENGINEERS,

&c., &c., &c.

Dated February 4th.

Recd. *Encl.*

G. O., 4th February 1871, No. 352.

FEBRUARY.

Nos. 108-109

Timber.—Passing orders on the letter from the Conservator of Forests submitting, for consideration, the propriety of granting to his department a monopoly of the supply of timber to the Public Works and other Government Departments.